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Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 AID-05 /079 W
---------- 113322
R 260636Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 989
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ET, ZA
SUBJECT: REACTION TO ETHIOPIAN EXECUTIONS

1. ZAMBIAN PRESS NOV 25 SHARPLY AND STRONGLY CONDEMNED EXECUTION OF SIXTY FORMER ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS. GOVERNMENT-OWNED DAILY MAIL CALLED EXECUTIONS "A BARBAROUS ACT THAT DESERVES CONDEMNATION OF ALL THE CIVILIZED WORLD." INDEPENDENT TIMES OF ZAMBIA TERMED THEM "COLD BLOODED MURDER" RIVALLING LIQUIDATIONS OF LEADING UGANDANS IN EARLY DAYS OF IDI AMIN'S RULE. BOTH PAPERS DECLARED THAT EXECUTIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT PRIOR LEGAL FORMALITIES AND WERE ACT OF "FRIGHTENED MEN." PRESS GLOOMILY PREDICTED THAT THESE EXECUTIONS WILL NOT BE THE LAST AND THAT ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE WILL EVENTUALLY TURN ON THOSE WHO HAVE PERPETRATED THEM. "AS THINGS ARE TODAY," DAILY MAIL STATED, "MILITARY REGIME IN ETHIOPIA IS WORSE THAN THE OLD CORRUPT REGIME OF THE ARISTOCRACY." EXECUTIONS HAVE DONE DAMAGE NOT ONLY TO IMAGE OF ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION BUT TO
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AFRICAN CAUSE SINCE, AS DAILY MAIL PUT IT,

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"ALL ENEMIES OF AFRICA ARE BOUND TO CAPITALIZE ON IT."
MAIL EDITORIAL CONCLUDED WITH CALL FOR REMOVAL OF
OAU HEADQUARTERS FROM ADDIS ABABA "UNLESS THERE
IS DEFINITE CHANGE TO A CIVILIZED WAY OF LIFE"
ON PART OF ETHIOPIA'S MILITARY RULERS.

2. COMMENT: SIMILARITY OF VIEWS AND EVEN OF
PHRASEOLOGY BETWEEN DAILY MAIL AND TIMES EDITORIALS
SUGGESTS THAT PAPERS MAY HAVE RECEIVED POLICY
GUIDANCE FROM ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT IN COMMENTING
ON ETHIOPIAN EVENTS. PREVIOUS ZAMBIAN PRESS
EDITORIALS ON ETHIOPIAN SITUATION, INCLUDING
DEPOSITION OF EMPEROR, HAD BEEN MORE AMBIVALENT
TOWARD MILITARY REGIME. WHILE CONTINUING PROFESS
RESPECT FOR HAILE SELASSIE AS AFRICAN ELDER STATES-
MEN, PRESS HAD CONSIDERED MILITARY COUP AS JUSTIFIED
IN LIGHT OF EVIDENCE BEING PRODUCED OF IMPERIAL
GOVERNMENT'S CORRUPTION AND NEGLECT OF ITS CITIZENRY.
EXECUTIONS OF FORMER IMPERIAL OFFICIALS AS WELL AS
OF GENERAL ANDOM, ARRESTS OF TRADE UNIONISTS, AND
DISPERSAL OF STUDENTS INTO COUNTRYSIDE TO STIFLE
THEIR OPPOSITION TO MILITARY REGIME HAVE NOW
APPARENTLY CONVINCED MANY ZAMBIANS THAT NEW REGIME
EMBARKED ON REIGN OF TERROR AND DISINTERESTED IN
IMPROVING LOT OF ETHIOPIAN COMMON MAN.

3. EXECUTIONS HAVE NO DOUBT RECONFIRMED ZAMBIAN
LEADERSHIP'S FEARS OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOLDIERS
SEIZE POWER. PROMPT DENUNCIATION OF ETHIOPIAN
BLOODSHED BY ZAMBIAN PRESS IN ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT
KAUNDA AND HIS PRINCIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISORS
WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT UNIP SECGEN ZULU,
BOLSTERED UNDOUBTEDLY BY SUCH HEAVY WEIGHTS AS
HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER MILNER, HAVE NO HESITATION
ABOUT LETTING ZAMBIA'S VOICE BE HEARD, EVEN IF
"UNOFFICIALLY" VIA PRESS. WHETHER OR NOT
GOVERNMENT AND/OR PARTY LEADERSHIP ACTUALLY HAD
HAND IN DRAFTING PRESS GUIDANCE, OBVIOUSLY
COORDINATED, PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF EXCESSES
OF ETHIOPIAN (AND UGANDAN) MILITARY RULE SERVES
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TO IMPRESS ZAMBIANS WITH POSSIBLE TRAGIC CON-
SEQUENCES OF MILITARY TAKE-OVERS.

4. ZAMBIANS ALSO STRIKE US AS BECOMING MORE
OPEN OVER PAST TWO YEARS IN THEIR EMBARRASSMENT
WITH AND CRITICISM OF THE OFFENSIVE REGIMES IN
AFRICA WHICH HAVE TENDED TO GIVE CONTINENT A
BAD NAME AND TO RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT DOUBLE

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STANDARDS BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE REGIMES.
ZAMBIANS RECOGNIZE THAT EVENTS IN ETHIOPIA
WILL BE SEIZED UPON BY WHITE HARDLINERS IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THEIR SUPPORTERS ABROAD TO
JUSTIFY POLICY OF CONTINUED INTRANSIGENCE IN
FACE OF CURRENT ZAMBIAN AND OTHER AFRICAN
EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE PEACEFUL PROGRESS TOWARD
RACIAL JUSTICE AND MAJORITY RULE IN SOUTH AFRICA,
NAMIBIA, AND RHODESIA.
WILKOWSKI

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